



Impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and relationships in the Finnish companies

Parminder Singh
Mandeep Kaur

Master's thesis
November 2019
School of Business
Master's Degree Programme in International Business Management

Author(s) Singh, Parminder Kaur, Mandeep	Type of publication Master's thesis	Date November 2019
		Language of publication: English
	Number of pages 61	Permission for web publication: yes
Title of publication Impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and relationships in the Finnish companies		
Degree Programme Master's Degree Programme in International Business Management		
Supervisor(s) Akpinar, Murat		
Assigned by JAMK Centre for Competitiveness		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>Organizational communication today depends largely on various social technologies, such as emails and conference calls as well as social media. However, there are contrasting perspectives on the significance of social technologies in organizations. Further, there is little research on this topic specifically with regard to Finnish companies. Upon such a background, impacts of social technologies on communication and interpersonal relationships within organizations were examined in the present study.</p> <p>Four main research questions were explored: How have social technologies impacted on the communication in mobile work from home in the Finnish companies?; The influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in the Finnish companies; The role of social technologies on interpersonal/face-to-face communication with employees in the Finnish companies; and How have social technologies unified communication among employees in the Finnish companies?</p> <p>The data was collected from five staff members of Finnish companies who were sampled through convenience sampling. The participants were all in management positions. The data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. The study found that social technologies played an important role in both communication and improvement of interpersonal relationships in most companies. Most notably, there was increased work from home, reduced quantity of face-to-face communication but increased quality of the same as well as increased employee engagement both individually and within teams.</p> <p>There is need to create a supportive environment within organizations for employees to make the most of the opportunities that social technologies bring.</p>		
Keywords/tags (social technologies, smartphones in the work place, social media, communication, employee collaboration, employee relationships)		
Miscellaneous (<u>Confidential information</u>)		

Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Background	4
1.2	Problem Statement.....	6
1.3	Research Aims and Objectives	8
1.4	Research Questions	8
1.4	Significance of the study	10
1.5	Structure of the thesis	10
2	Literature Review	11
	Key Concepts.....	12
2.1.1	Organizational communication	12
2.2	Social technology theories.....	14
2.2.1	Adaptive Structuration Theory.....	14
2.2.2	Cognitive Dissonance theory.....	16
2.2.3	Attribution Theory	18
2.3	Organizational Communication and interrelationship theories.....	19
2.3.1	Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures.....	19
2.3.3	Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory	22
2.3.4	Deetz's Managerialism Theory	23
2.4	Impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and interrelationships	24
2.4.1	The role of social technologies on the interpersonal face to face communication among employees	25
2.4.2	Impacts of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees	27

2.4.3 The Impacts of social technologies on mobile work from home communication	29
2.4.4 The influence of social technology on the unification of communication among employees	31
2.5 Conclusion.....	32
2.6 Theoretical Framework.....	32
3 Methodology.....	34
3.1 Selection of appropriate research design.....	34
3.2 Data collection methods and procedure	36
3.3 Participants' demographic analysis	37
3.4. Data analysis	38
3.5 Research ethics	39
4 Findings and analysis	40
4.1 Impacts of social technologies on mobile work from home communication 40	
4.2. Influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in Finnish companies	42
4.3. Role of social technologies on face to face communication with employees 43	
4.4. How social technologies unified communication among employees in Finnish companies.....	47
5 Discussion, conclusions, and recommendations	48
5.1 Discussion	48
5.2. Limitations and future research avenues	51
5.3 Conclusion.....	52
5.3 Recommendations	52

6	References	53
----------	-------------------------	-----------

Figures

Figure1. Smartphone penetration in Finland from 2012-2014	7
Figure2. Attribution Theory	22
Figure3. Theoretical Framework.....	36

Tables

Table 3.1: Demographic profile of the respondents.....	41
--	----

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the recent decades, business strategies have significantly evolved as a result of swift technological integration that has automated most business tasks and operations and, as a result, led to more efficient and simpler business processes. Fueled by the development of smartphones, the world has witnessed a swift development of various social technologies, mainly attributed to the increase in the use of smartphones. As asserted by Deloitte (2014) there has been a steady development of smartphones with no sign of slowdown at any time soon. This has created more room for growth especially among the older generations where smartphone penetration has still not been fully exploited. Particularly in Finland, about a third of the population owns a smartphone with the highest penetration among the younger population group aged between 18-24 as shown in Figure 1 below.

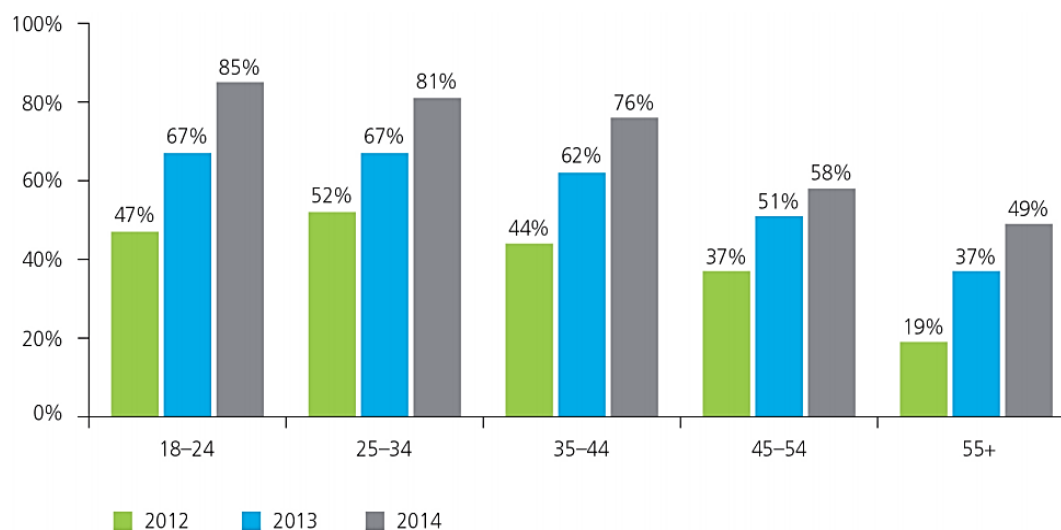


Figure 1. Smartphone penetration in Finland from 2012-2014 (Deloitte, 2014).

Moreover, smartphones have grown to become one of the most crucial parts of everyone's daily life. In Finland, which is the context of this study, about 35% of the users of smartphones are estimated to use or check their smartphones for about 25 times within each day. The young generations, in other words, those aged 25 years

and below are the most addicted, and they are estimated to check their smartphone for about 55 times every day. Consequently, the development of various social technologies aided by the increase in smartphone penetration is increasingly revolutionizing the business world. As noted by Smith (2016), the increase in social media penetration, aided by the increase in smartphone usage in the world, is increasingly revolutionizing how organizations communicate and interact with their employees. This has given a competitive advantage to those firms that use social technological communication to edge others in the highly competitive technology industry. For instance, this has forced businesses to change the ways in which they create, disseminate, plan or distribute their messages to their employees or among their employees.

On a different note, Forbes (2013) notes that the penetration of social technologies has disrupted the outmoded face-to-face organizational communication, which formed the day to day communication in organizations. Instead, organizational communication today depends largely on various social technologies, such as emails and conference calls. Though the majority have complained about or expressed their dissatisfaction with the latest social technologies that have become organizational norms, the number of employees working in virtual teams in the global world is on the rise. This is coupled with an increase in the number of organizations that largely depend on social technology to enhance their business relationships. This is a clear indication that social technology is, indeed, a good invention/innovation provided that the most effective social technology is being utilized.

As further asserted by Forbes (2014), the answer to all the dissatisfactions with evolving communication technologies at the workplace is not to do away with technology in its entirety but to develop it in a way that would encourage new ways of working or coordinating with the employees. Consequently, this can be effectively achieved by using the new generation of social technologies which have been globally proved to address new ways of working at any business or organization by making the work more delightful and joyful. To this end, this thesis/study aimed to study various areas in which social technologies and innovations have revolutionized communications and relationships within businesses or organizations with a specific focus on the Finnish technology industry.

1.2 Problem Statement

Over recent decades, there has been a plethora of studies and theories on the influence or impacts of social technology or social communications. Most studies have been carried out on the impacts of social technology on face-to-face communications and social interactions among individuals following the emergence of social media and smartphone usage in the 2000s. As observed by Drago (2015), the current developments in social technologies have increasingly revolutionized how people connect by easing communications among people who are far away from each other. For instance, Misra, Cheng, Genevie, and Yuan (2014) conducted a study by examining the interrelationship between the quality of real-life and the presence of social technologies in the context of in-personal social interactions. Utilizing naturalistic field experiments, the researchers discovered that interactions without mobile communication technologies were relatively more frequent than those with mobile communication technologies. Particularly, the authors found that those who were involved in face-to-face communication without the use of any mobile communication technologies showed a relatively higher level of empathetic concerns compared to those who communicated through mobile communication technologies.

Similarly, Przybylski and Weinstein (2012) also state that in any social interaction setup, the presence of mobile or social communication technologies or devices greatly interferes with the relationships between humans. In their experiments, the authors found that the conversation quality, connection, and closeness among humans was negatively affected by the presence of social communication technologies or devices, and more so when the communication involved personally meaningful issues. Contrarily, a study by Campbell and Kwak (2011) shows contradicting results related to the influence of communication through mobile devices or technologies' on the degree of face-to-face communication between strangers in a public setup. Their findings indicate that the utilization of cell phones in public by individuals might positively influence their willingness to communicate with strangers. By taking into consideration the usage of various types of mobile

phones, the authors found that the use of mobile technologies in a public setup facilitated communication between strangers especially among those who often relied on cell phones as a means of exchanging and obtaining new information.

Consequently, as a result of these contradicting findings, current and up-to-date research needs to be conducted to uncover conclusive and true findings. Moreover, the impacts of social technologies on communications and interrelationships in organization are worth exploring as these past studies have mainly focused on personal communication instead of organizational communication. Finally, the phenomenon under investigation is worth exploring as the existing studies have mainly focused on the impacts of social technologies on face-to-face communication with little focus on their impacts on other current communication aspects within an organization. These include work from home communication, communication collaboration among employees, the unification of communication among employees in addition to enhancing face-to-face communication among employees. Nonetheless, despite the significance of social technologies at the workplace, very few studies have focused specifically on the context of Finnish companies, as most of them focus on large economies, such as the US and UK. Thus, this calls for a study particularly in the context of the Finnish companies, in order to fill such theoretical gaps in the literature.

Finally, the need to conduct a study in the context of the Finnish companies is driven by the recent competition in the various industries, mainly as a result of the emergence of new and cheap entrants into the market. As a result of such competition, firms in Finland have been forced to look for other effective means of gaining a competitive edge and remaining relevant and sustainable in their respective industries. One such means that firms can employ is taking advantage of various social innovations or technologies in order to coordinate work from home communication, enhance the organization's collaboration with its employees and improve its interpersonal communication with the employees as well as foster a unified communication among its employees.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study was to explore the impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and relationships in the Finnish companies. To achieve this aim, the following research objectives were formulated to guide the study.

- To investigate how social technologies have impacted communication in mobile work from home in the Finnish companies.
- To explore the influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in the Finnish companies.
- To explore the role of social technologies on interpersonal/face-to-face communication with employees in Finnish companies.
- To critically investigate how social technologies have unified communication among employees in the Finnish companies.

1.4 Research Questions

In recent decades, the global workplace has transformed so that there are no limits to office hours or time zones. As noted by Forbes (2013), modern organizations have allowed their employees to attend to work emails in the comfort of their homes while taking lunch or dinner without having to be physically present in the office. Additionally, the development of social technologies has enabled employees to take part in conference calls in the odd hours of the night or day and conduct their activities afterward. This has resulted in a balanced working life that is beneficial to both the organization and the individual employees. The organizations benefit in terms of increased productivity, while individual employees benefit in terms of happy work experiences. Moreover, as noted by Forbes (2013), the evolution of social technologies, such as smartphones, has led to increased employees' connection to their workplace. Thus, this shows that embracement of social technologies in workplace communications and interrelationships is significantly crucial and should not be ignored by any organization willing to succeed. This leads us to the first research question of this study:

- How have social technologies impacted communication in mobile work from home in the Finnish companies?

Additionally, while the traditional collaboration in organizations used to take place in boardrooms, collaboration in today's organizations has become an essential component that is edited and implemented by various organizations around the globe. According to Forbes (2013), about 79% of employees carry out their organizational roles virtually due to the importance and capabilities associated with social technologies. For instance, it is estimated that it takes only a short period to communicate to employees by leveraging on social technologies, such as videos, in the context of a collaborative work environment as employees pay more attention than in situations where social technologies are lacking. Apart from video conferencing, social media platforms, such as Facebook, also play a very essential role in organizational communication by filling the humanity gap that cannot be effectively filled by conference calls and impersonal emails. This increases emotional interrelationships as well as engagement among employees in an organization. As a result, this translates to improved productivity for the organization and satisfied employees.

Secondly, only a few articles have been written on the impacts of social technologies on collaboration among employees. Forbes (2013), for instance, argues that social technologies have enhanced the sharing of information and exchange of knowledge among employees, and this has led to a highly collaborating workforce at workplaces. To this end, we arrive at the second research question:

- What is the influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in the Finnish companies?

Thirdly, the principal researcher at Microsoft, Baym, has argued that social technologies enhance face-to-face communications as the more people communicate through social technologies, the more they would be inclined to communicate with them face-to-face (Forbes 2017). This leads us to the third research question:

- What is the role of social technologies in interpersonal/face-to-face communication among employees in the Finnish companies?

Lastly, social technologies have also played a significant role in boosting unified communication among employees in the workplace. According to Forbes (2013), social technologies, such as those that enable employees to connect via video, have helped in the enhancement of social engagement among employees, which in turn boosts the overall organizational productivity. This leads us to the fourth and last research question:

- How have social technologies unified communication among employees in the Finnish companies?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study is significant to organizational managers, including HR and public relation managers as it suggests ways in which they can enhance the overall performance of a firm. These include improved face-to-face communication and relationships.

Enhanced communication collaboration in the firm and work from home communication play an essential role in helping organizations gain competitive edge in the Finnish companies which have become increasingly competitive. The study is also of great significance to academicians as it contributes to the existing theoretical discourse on the role of social technologies in enhancing organizational communications and relationships among employees, which has remained inadequately explored in the existing theoretical discourse or literature.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis was organized chronologically into five major sections from Chapter 1 to Chapter 5. Chapter 1 is the introduction chapter containing the background information as well as discussing the research aims and objectives, significance of the study, research questions, problem statement and the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 is the literature review where the past theoretical views and theories on the phenomenon under investigation are discussed, analyzed and compared.

Particularly, the key concepts and the theoretical framework are described and

defined in this chapter. Chapter 3 is the methodology section where various methodologies employed in the study are evaluated. These include a description of the case company, case study data collection methods, and procedures, sample and sampling techniques, ethical concerns as well as the data analysis methods. Chapter 4 presents the findings and data analysis where primary data from selected case studies are presented and analyzed concerning the existing literature and in line with the four research objectives of this study. The study concludes with a conclusion and recommendation section where a summary of the study and recommendations are presented. Moreover, various limitations and suggestions for further studies are also outlined in this last chapter.

2 Literature Review

The literature review section is the second chapter of this thesis, and it commences with a brief description and definition of the key terms/ themes emerging from the study, namely, organizational communication and social technologies, in order to provide a basis for a better understanding of the major discussions in the study. The section then proceeds to discuss and analyze various theories and concepts that can be used in explaining organizational communication and social technology concepts. These theories include social technology theories, such as the adaptive structuration theory, cognitive dissonance theory and attribution theory. Moreover, these theories entail organizational communication theories, such as Weber's classic organizational theory of fixed structures, Tompkins and Cheney's organizational control theory as well as Deetz's managerialism theory. After a review of the theories, the chapter reviews various theoretical discourses and literature on the impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and interrelationships. Under this section, the study explores and discusses the impacts of social technologies on mobile work from home communication. It also discusses

the impacts of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees, the role of social technologies in enhancing interpersonal face-to-face communication among employees and the influence of technology on the unification of communication among employees. In conclusion, this chapter ends with a general summary of the literature review before delineating the theoretical framework of the study.

Key Concepts

2.1.1 Organizational communication

As a concept, organizational communication has been regarded as a goal-oriented and strategic activity that can be utilized by firms to realize the desired outcomes and goals. However, despite its significance, the meaning and description of the term remain unclear to the majority; thus the description of the term is worth exploring in any study touching on communication within the context of organizations. Following Seitan (2017), the term organizational communication as used in business context entails every activity that a firm does and speaks about in addition to everybody who is affected by the activities and existence of the firm. As such, Seitan sees organizational communication as the process of negotiating and creating coordinated and collective systems of meanings via symbolic norms that are geared towards the realization of the general objectives and goals of a firm. On a different tenet, Sadia, Mohd, Karid, & Sanif (2016) define the concept of organizational communication as identification and communication of a firm's corporate strategy and goals or objectives of organizational processes together with the firm's managers. To add on to their explanations, the authors argue that the overall aim of

organizational communication is to ensure that all stakeholders in the company, including the employees and shareholders, work with a mutual goal in the firm. A more detailed description of organizational communication is, however, offered by Winarso (2018) who argues that it falls under three major categories of communication activities. The first one is the organization of communication in order to realize the objectives of the firm. This is often referred simply to as operational-internal. The second one is the operational external, which refers to the communication structure within a firm, and it primarily emphasizes the realization of work objectives undertaken by the employees of the firm together with other stakeholder-groups outside the firm. Social Technologies

Social technologies continue to experience rapid growth in the society with new social technologies emerging with each day that pass. However, the term social technology is still confusing to the majority of the population who, instead, refer to it to solely mean social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. On the other hand, people also find it problematic to define the term and distinguish between material and social technology due to their little currency in reflection in both social sciences and society in general. With the invention of the types of social technologies, the term has undergone various redefinitions, thus distinguishing it from its original meanings. According to Skarzauskiene, Zalieniene and Tamosiunaite (2013), for instance, the term social technology refers to technologies utilized for goals with a social basis, such as social communication hardware like the traditional communication media, social software as well as social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. Considering these definitions, Sadia et al. (2016) distinguish social technologies from any other technologies by arguing that they are enabled by information technology and that they offer distributed rights to either pass, as well

as create or modify communications and contents. On the contrary, IG Global (2019) defines the term social technology as the application of social science methods and theories in the implementation of related social technologies in order to enhance social procedures through both social software and hardware, which might entail the utilization of information technology and computers.

2.2 Social technology theories

For over two and a half decades, technology theories have remained one of the little-explored sociology areas as they are rarely missing in the explanation of the history and development of technology. As observed by Mark (2012), despite the concept of technology having originated long time ago, majority of historians have been relying only on a single theory, constructivism theory to explain technological development and history. However, with time, several social technologies have been developed to explain the origin and use of social technology. Therefore, in this section of the research, a number of social, technology theories are reviewed and described to explain social technology including adaptive structuration theory, cognitive dissonance theory as well as attribution theory as below.

2.2.1 Adaptive Structuration Theory

According to Darshana and Hidayati (2017), Adaptive Structuration Theory that is often simply abbreviated as AST originates from Anthony Giddens's Structuration Theory and has been in existence ever since 1984 when the constitution of the society was first enacted. The theory addresses human behavioural issues in technological context based on social structures. The theory investigates the process of computer usage by humans as well as at the nature of human interactions with

the computer. With the major emphasis on using information technology to communicate, the theory highlights some of the concepts of structuration and appropriation in addition to drawing the link between organizational and human learning. This is as a result of the AST critical concept that effectively addresses the issue of human interaction with technology as a basis of their activity (Darshana and Hidayati 2017).

On a different tenet, Lethbridge (2003) argues that adaptive structuration theory was developed on the pretext that the outcomes of an organization; unsuccessful or successful as not solely due to the application of new technologies. Instead, it was developed on the pretext of the way an organization adopts and adapts technological structures and the manner in which it responds to technology by adapting its structures. Thus, the theory suggests both iterative and reciprocal interrelationship between the context under which technology is used and technology itself; organizational structures are affected by technology, and technology is also affected by organizational structures. As such, various organizations adopt distinct means of utilizing technology with the technology being adapted to fit the organizational contexts under which it is being utilized.

Similar sentiments are also shared by Rains and Bonito (2017), who argued that adaptive structuration theory provides effective description and explanation for the effects and use of technologies within an organizational context. According to these authors, the theory does so by emphasizing the dynamic interrelationship between technological structures such as sharing of documents and how such technologies are utilized by members or stakeholders within the organization, including producing documents collaboratively. Moreover, just like Lethbridge (2003), Rains and Bonito

(2017) also argue that the outcomes arising from technological use within an organization are often eventually dependent on the way the structures within the organization are appropriated. For instance, while in some organizational groups might see it fit to work on a document in parallel, in other organizations, the groups might decide to work on the document in series.

Even though adaptive structuration has been in existence and use by various researchers for decades after its acceptance as a substantial social theory contributor, the theory has also come under sharp criticism in equal measures. One of the major critiques of the theory has been with regards to conflation (the issue of reducing structures to actions and difficulty experienced in the documentation of institution from action) of agency and structure. Rose (2016) for instance, has categorically criticized the theory by arguing that it weakens the analytical power and ignores the distinction between the original social conception and integration of systems by Lookwood due to its conflating agency and structures. Further, Rose (2016) argues that to effectively account for why things are the way they are and not vice versa, maintenance of analytical distinction between people in the society, the society, in general, to supply an ontological grounding for distinctions based on realism is necessary. In her view, the author opines that agency and structure are phased over distinct tracks of time, which enables for their separation through analytical means.

2.2.2 Cognitive Dissonance theory

Cognitive dissonance theory is one of the significant theories of psychological research areas such as social technology and has generated significant number of experiments that are estimated to be in thousands to-date. According to Hinojosa et

al. (2016) cognitive dissonance theory which was first introduced in psychological theoretical discourses and literatures six decades ago has been widely applied in management theoretical discourses to either predict or explain the nature of dissonance in the production of behavior and attitude change in organizational context in general and decision making by managers in particular. Nonetheless, despite its long existence and application, the theory has in the recent past lost touch as a result of new theoretical developments in social technology field that have rendered it obsolete. As asserted by Tanford and Montgomery (2014), Festinger (1957) cognitive theory of dissonance states that human being tends to experience various conflicts in their decision-making process as they seek to minimize dissonance by improving the perceived attractiveness of their chosen alternative choices. At the same time, the theory states that human beings at the same time devalue the forgone alternative, changing their behaviors or attitude in line with their decision or seeking out information to affirm their choices. As further opined by Tanford and Montgomery (2014), the theory of cognitive dissonance assumes that under insufficient justification conditions or contexts, human beings are more probable to internalize their behavior than when they attribute the insufficient justification to external source. Thus, the influence posed by minority groups could be regarded as insufficient justification resulting in the dissonance that needs resolution.

Nonetheless, despite the wide application of cognitive dissonance theory in social science, the theory has also come under some sharp criticism. Welles (2017) for instance, has criticized cognitive dissonance theory by arguing that is not an effective predictor of human attitudes and behaviors as it is not possible for human beings to predict what he would do in cases where he or she entertains conflicting belief

systems. As such, the theory is criticized for its inability to not only meet the standards of scientific theory but also for being less useful when applied to human behavior in the context of real world.

2.2.3 Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is the work of Wiener, who argued that humans engage in causal search after either failure or successful event with failure event resulting in superior causal search (Maymon et al., 2018). Accordingly, important outcomes which are either unexpected or negative are viewed to result in higher causal search leading to three types of attributions; stability, controllability and locus. Further, Wiener's attribution theory hypothesizes that such causal explanations exert significant pressure on an individual's subsequent behavior and emotions as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Similarly, Alony, Hasanand Paris (2014) argue that the attribution theory majorly deals with the reasons as to why and how individuals form opinions behind an observation or event. According to these authors, the theory is based on the notion that sense-making, understanding, and behaviors by humans are founded on perceptions; individuals establish explanations for set of behaviors of others on the basis of how they perceive the reality and behavior surrounding it.

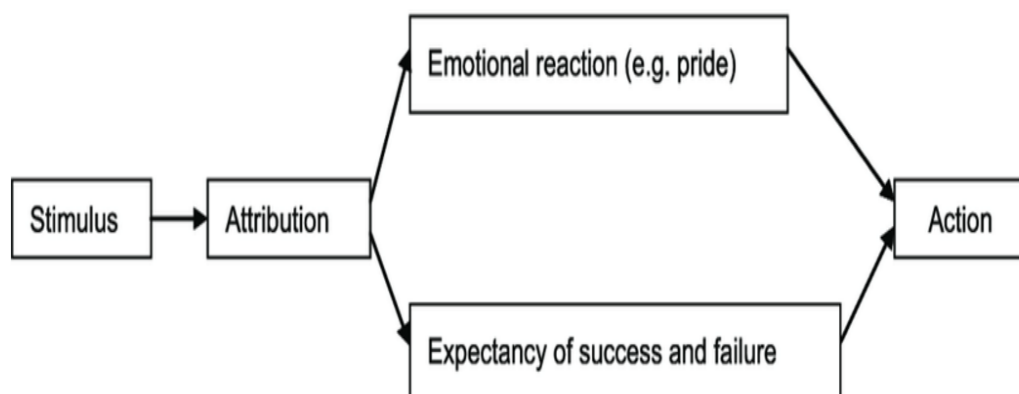


Figure 1: Attribution Theory (Maymon et al., 2018).

2.3 Organizational Communication and interrelationship theories

Organizational communication has recently become a highly contested topic not only in the field of management but also in other fields such as marketing as organizations view effective communications in the organization as a sure way of gaining competitive edge in the industries which have become increasingly competitive.

According to Husain (2013) the much focus on communication within the organization has been as a result of consequences associated with effective or ineffective communications within the firm. For instance, ineffective communications have been recognized as a major cause of organizational change programs as it leads to resistance to change programs and rumors. On the other hand, effective communication within the organization is regarded as a significant component in ensuring effective implementation of change programs within the firm. The importance of organizational communication has for instance been widely explored area of research in management discourses. Consequently, a significant number of theories have been utilized in explaining organizational communications. In this research, however, only three such theories are focused on; Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures, Deetz's Managerialism Theory and Tompkins, and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory as below.

2.3.1 Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures

Max Weber is often regarded as the most respected pioneer of management theory in organizational management studies. According to Robbins and Judge (2007), Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures is regarded as the first

theory to have defined structure of organization to offer meaning to the process of communication that takes place within a firm. The theory states assume that clearly defined responsibilities and roles are vested in organizations, and as a result, communication within the organization is clear, structured and hierarchical; confusion scope does not exist in the message being conveyed from the topmost hierarchy. This implies that rigid machine-like structures exist within organizations that allow every individual within the organization to make their contributions through unambiguous and defined responsibilities and roles. As opined by Robbins and Judge (2007) the analysis by Weber offers a place of importance to merit and how organizations operate is through effective allocation of duties and responsibilities following the seniority and capabilities that are predetermined by fixed notions of such concepts.

As noted by Onday (2016), Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures was significantly influenced by Taylor's work on implication of bureaucracy. The theory extrapolates some of the ideal features or characteristics of bureaucratic organizations from the real world to include. Firstly, that there exists an official and a fixed jurisdictional area ordered by rules such as administrative regulations and laws; the organizational management follows certain set rules and regulations which are less or more stable, can be leaned and are more or less exhaustive. Moreover, other characteristics include that, the official activity of the organization demands full working capacity of the official in cases where the office is fully developed even if his or her time of obligation might be firmly delimited in the bureau. Moreover, other notable characteristics of the organization, according to Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures is that at least all specialized office

management is often distinctly modern and, as such presupposes through expert training.

Despite its usefulness in management disciplines, Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures has also come under sharp criticism in equal measures.

One of the significant criticisms of the theory, as noted by Onday (2016), is that it is highly outdated and rarely useful in the modern world we live today. Particularly, the rational notion of physical person as envisaged in the theory has been criticized with critics arguing that management based on rewards might be completely applicable in the 19th C onwards and for few organizations and individuals today. Consequently, this might not hold good at work today due to the great change in aspirations and work of individuals in society. Additionally, organizational contexts have increasingly become too complex, thus necessitates more creativity, judgment, and ownership from organizational employees, which makes the application of classical theory problematic owing to its assumption that all organizations can be generally managed based on universal principles. With increasing changes in organizational environment, structures and objectives, today's organizations have made significant changes with regards to principles and the manner in which organizations should be efficiently and effectively managed to enhance productivity.

Another critic of the classical model, as noted by Onday (2016) is that the theory cannot stand for the test of time, and it is also not scientific as they only reflect empirical observation of individuals together with their deductions, which are neither evidence-based nor scientific.

2.3.3 Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory

According to Robbins and Judge (2007), Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory is an extension of Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures that is often applicable in organizations that are slowly moving away from the bureaucratic mode through not yet completely amorphous. Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory assumes that organizational exercise of power within is solely determined by four major controls; concrete, bureaucratic, technical, and simple. Nonetheless, the theory differs from Weber's classic organization theory in that in Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control model, communication and control are much more but less than organization communication and control as envisaged by postmodern theorists.

Contrarily, Bisel, Ford, and Keyton (2007) assert that Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory is based on the assumption that managers tasked with managing organizations often implement practices that are aimed at promoting participatory decision making by employees. Supposedly, organizational employees and workers are increasingly requested to make their inputs without organizational management, not having to relinquish their control. Instead, organizational management utilizes their elusive or refined discourse to encourage or motivate employees or workers to contribute to particular decision-making process within the organization as it absurdly and simultaneously motivates participation or organizational employees and workers in organizational decision-making process. Tompkins and Cheney referred to such process as unobtrusive control, which assumes that the functioning of organization occurs via intrinsically communication process by organizational employees and workers in decision making. The second

assumption is that employees and workers in the organization who perceive membership as a positive concept are more prone to management guidance during the process of decision making within the firm or organization.

Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory is a reliable source of organizational communication, making it useful in the running of corporate firms (Monroe, 2002). For instance, the study of Fortune 500 firms utilizes organizational identification, which is a major component of the theory to illustrate the practical application of the theory. Overall, the theory is agreeable and effective to the theoretical communication criteria as it offers guidance both in the evaluation of corporate firms and offering explanations as to how communications take place within a firm.

2.3.4 Deetz's Managerialism Theory

The evolution of models and structures of the organization has produced theories and models that are a true reflection of organizational practices and norms in recent decades, and Deetz's Managerialism is one such theory. According to Robbins and Judge (2007) Deetz's Managerialism theory attempts to describe and define how control and communication within the context of organization where economic and political knowledge interests are used to replace classical notions. Accordingly, this theory's highlights go beyond simple fixed organizational notions but instead posits a firm that considers both the power center in the organization as well as democratic aspirations of employees in the organization. Accordingly, the theory recognizes that as opposed to people's words, meanings lie within organizational employees. At the heart of Deetz's Managerialism theory, it's the tension or paradox that is critical to communicate to employees in the organization. As such, the theory is a skeptic that

aims to disrupt manifestation of business as usual and corporate power in American organizations. On the contrary, the theory is also serving as an external optimist regarding the communication powers within the organization to bring about positive changes within the firm and to improve stakeholders' roles and responsibilities, which is traced from Karl Max's economic view and Jurgen Habermas's ideal speech situation.

2.4 Impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and interrelationships

Organizational communication cut across parts of nearly every person's life. For instance, majority of children are educated or raised through some form of organization and continue to pass through some form of organization during their working life by working for various organizations, either public or private. Consequently, several studies have been conducted on the impacts of organizational communication, with several theories being formulated to help in explaining the same. Nonetheless, the impacts of social technologies on organizational communication remains inadequately explored area in theoretical discourses and literature. To this end, this section of the literature review entails delineates analyses and discusses past literatures with regards to the impacts and role of social technologies on organization communication and relationships. Particularly, the role of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees, the role of social technologies on mobile work from home communication, the role of social technologies in enhancing interpersonal face to face communication among employees are analyzed and discussed in this section. Moreover, the influence of

technology on unification of communication among employees are analyzed and discussed in this section of literature review as below.

2.4.1 The role of social technologies on the interpersonal face to face communication among employees

Over the recent decades, usage of technology and social technology in particular among people in the world has been on the upsurge. For instance, in countries such as the US, the usage of technology among households stood at 76% by 2011 in comparison to a mere 18% in 1998 as per the US Census statistics. Consequently, several management scholars and academicians have carried out scientific inquiries on the possible impacts of technology on face to face communication or interactions owing to the emergence of smartphones and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The studies are, however, with most findings suggesting that social technologies influences face to face communication negatively while others believe that it does exert significant positive influence on face to face communications and interrelationships.

Drago, E (2015) for instance conducted a research to determine the effects of social technology on face to face communication on Elgon undergraduate university students by analyzing prior researches, conducting field observations to students within Elgon campus, and administering online survey to Elgon university students with the assistance of non-probability sampling method through email and Facebook. The findings of the study show that social technology impacts negatively on both the quantity and quality of face to face communications among students of Elgon campus. The findings suggest that technology has a negative effect on both the quality and quantity of face-to-face communication. In the study, students were

asked some questions touching on their use of technology, habits, and their perceptions regarding face to face communication using social technology in an effort to determine if social technology exerts negative or positive influence on face to face communication among Elgon campus students.

Moreover, to complement the surveys, field observations were also carried out within the most populated areas within Elgon campus including the campus dining halls during lunch hours when student traffic was higher. The research findings showed that about 92% of students in the survey acknowledged the presence of social technology to be exerting negative influence on face to face communication. Further, majority of students who took part in the survey (89%) acknowledged that social technology results into degradation of communication or conversation. Results from these surveys, which are supported by previous theoretical discourses, confirm that indeed rapid development of social technologies has a negative influence on face to face communication among students, especially by affecting the quality of communication with friends and family members.

Nonetheless, the study by Drago (2015), just like any other study was marred with a number of limitations that might have affected its validity and reliability. One such limitation was that the study utilized non-probability sampling technique, convenience sampling method which makes generalizations of the study findings to the general population very problematic. Thus, this is a research gap that this current study aims to fill by employing the use of probability sampling methods to come up with valid and reliable findings that can effectively be generalized to the entire population.

Similarly, Subramanian (2017) also conducted studies on the impacts of social technology on face to face communication among individuals by particularly

determining the effects of social media on interpersonal communication using literature review methods. The findings of their study show that social media has negatively impacted on face to face communication between individuals, more so between millennial communication with their seniors. Specifically, the study indicates that the use of social technologies such as social media platforms has negatively influenced face to face communication between individuals by leading to loss of respect to elderly members of the family and friends by millennials. In addition to the loss of respect by the young population towards adults, social media have also resulted in serious issues regarding privacy as there is little control as to what one shares through social technologies or how such information is used by the third-party or social media companies. Nonetheless, this study is also subject to some limitations which might have influenced its validity and reliability, with its major limitation being that it is conducted through literature review method which does not present current and scientifically tested information. Thus, this current study aims to fill such research gaps through the use of primary data collection methods, which are more scientific and tested.

2.4.2 Impacts of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees

The impacts or influence of social technologies on communication collaboration have also been a widely explored area in management research. Following the National Communication Association (2015), social technologies play very critical role in communication collaboration within organization on day to day activities of the organization. These sentiments gain significant support from a report filed by the Linux Foundation in 2014 which recognized that collaborative technological

development is a major concern for majority of firms in the US. According to the report, nearly more than half of the respondents acknowledged that there would be a significant increase in development of and investments of collaborative technologies. National Communication Association (2015) utilized online survey data gathering methods to collect primary data from large multinational organizations in the technology industry within a number of nations, including Australia, Sydney, Columbia, and Bogota. Thereafter, the analysis of data was conducted using structural equation modeling method. The results of the study by National Communication Association (2015) show that social technologies positively impact collaboration communication among employees. For instance, the results show that the use of social technologies by employees in organizations enables for social networking features such as web-based content sharing and virtual meeting rooms, which enables organizational employees to effectively share documents and information as well as discussing issues and topics affecting the organization. As further stressed by National Communication Association (2015) social technologies also facilitate collaboration communication among organizational employees by not only facilitating knowledge exchange among organizational employees but also enabling sharing of vital organizational information among employees.

Differently, Parry and Solidoro (2013) conducted a scientific inquiry to investigate the role of social media in communication collaboration among both future and current organizational employees. In their empirical investigation, the authors collected data from the websites of UK companies through a total of 34 semi-structured interviews. The findings of the inquiry point to the fact that social technologies such as social media platforms play a vital role in facilitating communication collaboration among organizational employees by enhancing organizational or management engagement

with employees. Nonetheless, the findings also illustrate that the success of social technologies to enhance employee engagement in the organization is not automatic as it still largely depends on if organizational culture highly embraces open participation and communication. The study was, however, limited by a number of limitations that might have affected its reliability and validity. Particularly, the study relies heavily on a total two case study organizations and as such its findings might not be generalized to the entire organization. Thus, this is a major limitation that this current study aims to fill by conducting the survey from a large number of participants to get information that can be effectively generalized to the entire organizational context.

2.4.3 The Impacts of social technologies on mobile work from home communication

The advent of social technologies, coupled with the development and invention of cheaper internet and Smartphone have revolutionized the work culture and practices of organizations. As noted by Forbes (2017), the invention of social technologies has resulted in a flexible working approach where organizations give employees more flexible working hours that allows them to attend to their undertakings while also carrying organizational activities from the comfort of their homes through various social technologies. Consequently, such flexible work approach has resulted in a more culturally diverse organizations as each employee can undertake organizational responsibilities, attend an organizational meeting, virtually irrespective of their physical location.

Other studies on the impacts of social technologies on work from home communications were also carried out by Casio and Montealegre (2016) in their

review on how technology is changing work and organization. The authors argue that social technologies, including computer programs as well as intelligent robots, have enabled organizations employees to carry out various organizational tasks, including those that require relatively higher level of knowledge and skills from the comfort of their homes without having to be physically present in the organization.

Consequently, this has resulted in a significant reduction in organizational costs, improved productivity and safety as well as increased protection to the environment among others. Particularly, the use of social technologies has enabled organizations to effectively monitor their sales, products as well as customer data 24 hours a day and 7 days a week through work from home by employees. As a result, this has led to the supplementation of inventory promptly to offer additional services and products in addition to maintaining freshness. These findings are in line with Forbes (2013), who argues the newer developments in mobile technology arise, the more organizations embrace the philosophy of bringing your device to work, which leads to emergence of highly connected organizational employees.

Nonetheless, these studies are majorly conducted using secondary data analysis, which might have affected the reliability and validity of the findings as some of these secondary data are outdated and do not reflect the current true situation. To this end, this current study aims to fill this theoretical research gap by utilizing primary data collection and analysis methods in order to improve the validity and reliability of its findings.

2.4.4 The influence of social technology on the unification of communication among employees

Lastly, social technology and its impacts on the unification of communication among organizational employees have also been an area of concern in past theoretical discourses. Even though the impacts of social technology such as social networks or platforms on unification of communication among employees in an organization have been widely studied, few studies have aimed at measuring the extent and nature of such impacts. Wu (2013) for instance investigated the communication benefit that is found through structurally diverse social, technological networks. In his findings, the author contents those social technologies such as social network platforms have contributed to the universal sharing of organizational information among employees with similar information being shared among all employees of the firm. Additionally, the presence of social technologies such as social media networks has resulted in the unification of communication among employees by allowing employees to have openly expressed their opinions and establish relationships with others via same social technologies.

Nonetheless, it is worth noting that these studies were conducted sometimes back making their application and reliability in today's organization problematic as they do not effectively represent the current situation. As such, this current study aims to fill such research gaps by conducting current and primary research on the same to come up with more conclusive and reliable findings that effectively represent the current situation.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, from the literature review above, it is evident that a number of theories have been used to explain the concept of organizational communications and social technology. However, some of the widely applicable and common organizational theories, as analyzed and discussed in this literature review of this current research include; Weber's Classic Organizational Theory of Fixed Structures, Deetz's Managerialism Theory, and Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Control Theory. On the other hand, the most widely utilized or applied social technology theories include adaptive structuration theory, cognitive dissonance theory as well as attribution theory. Further the literature section of this study reveals that social technologies have played significant role in organizational communication among employees. Particularly, the study indicates that social technologies have exerted both positive and negative influences on mobile work from home communication, unification of communication among organizational employees, communication collaboration among organizational employees as well as on interpersonal face to face communication among employees.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

In light of the above theoretical analysis and discussion in the literature review section of this research, the following theoretical framework is developed to explain the interrelationship/impacts of social technologies and various organizational communication aspects, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

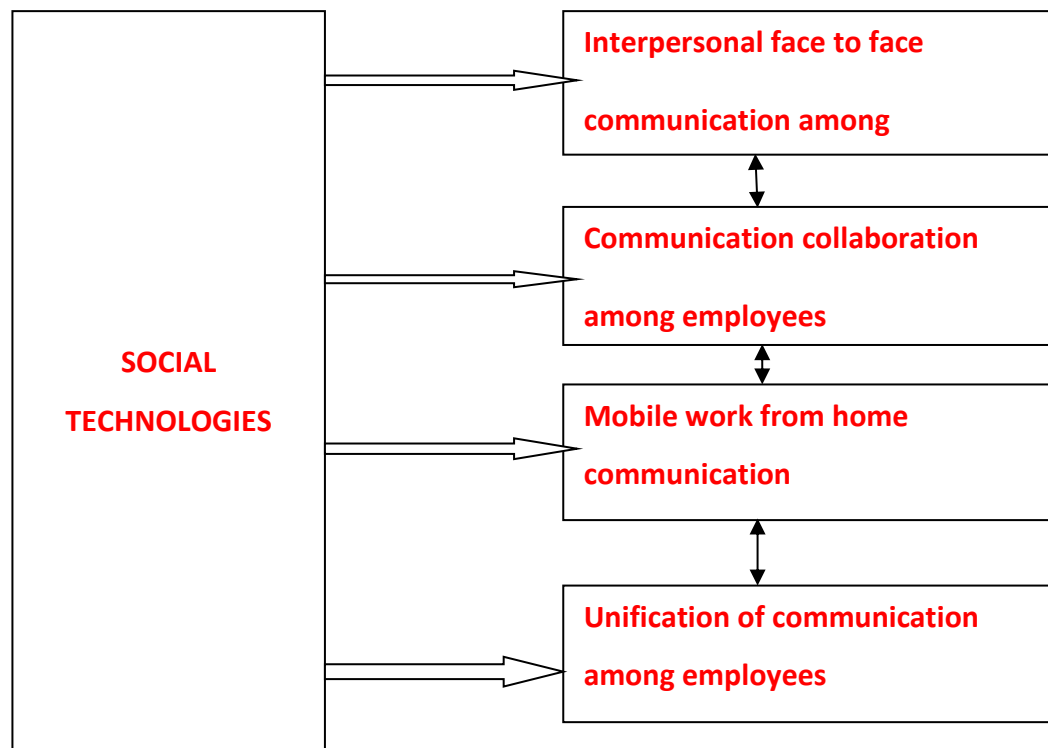


Figure 2: Theoretical Framework (Drawn by Author).

Figure 2 above shows how social technologies impact on organizational communications and relationships in the Finnish companies. Firstly, the figure shows that social technologies impacts on organizational communication and relationships by influencing interpersonal face to face communication among employees. Secondly, it also influences communication collaboration among employees as well as mobile work from home communication. Lastly, it also impacts or influences unification of communication among employees.

This theoretical framework is going to play a very significant role in arriving at the major themes of the study under which the responses from the study participants are presented.

3 Methodology

This chapter examines the methodology applied in the research. It discusses the methodology applied by the researcher in order to achieve the research objectives. The methodology mostly explored the procedures and the steps taken to design the appropriate methods for the research. It examined the collection of data as well as the tactics used to analyze and evaluate the collected information.

3.1 Selection of appropriate research design

The aim of this study was to investigate the impacts of social technologies on organizational communications and relationships in the Finnish companies. It also sought to explore the influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in the Finnish companies. The study also sought to explore the role of social technologies on interpersonal/face to face communication with employees in the Finnish companies. From these objectives, it was clear that the focus of this research was to explore or identify in-depth information concerning the social technologies and the kind of implications that these technologies had on organizational communication within the Finnish companies. Based on Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) the most appropriate research design was, therefore, the qualitative research design since the focus of the study was to explore and determine the impact of these technologies on the various dimensions of organizational communication. The qualitative design suited this academic inquiry since it focused on exploration and probing multiple types of impacts the social technologies research had on the various organizations within the Finnish companies (Haynes & Jones 2012). With the use of qualitative design, the researcher could easily identify new information

and perspectives concerning social technologies and how they impacted the organizational communication.

When using the qualitative design, the researcher could either use the primary research method or the secondary research technique. The primary data gathering technique mostly involved the collection of data directly from the source or the actual phenomena (Punch, 2013). In the case of this study, this would have involved collecting information from employees and customers and other stakeholders impacted by the organizational communication within the Finnish companies. For this study, secondary research and primary research were utilized to collect secondary data and primary data respectively. The use of secondary research in collecting secondary data was deemed appropriate due to its capability to reach out to all research elements via direct contacts in situations where phenomenon under investigation is wide (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). For instance, in the case of this research the phenomena which is the Finnish companies is very wide sectors with many stakeholders such as customers, employees, government hence the need to apply a data collection that could capture all the stakeholders in the industry. On the other hand, the use of primary research to collect primary data for the literature review was deemed useful as it provided first-hand and up-to-date information and findings that could be utilized to generalize the various industries. Moreover, it provided useful information and findings that could be used to make either disapprove or approve past theoretical discourses and literature touching on social technologies and their impacts on various aspects of the organizational communication, especially those concerning employees and the customers. The other theory of the secondary research was that it was explorative and provided in-depth information concerning the

phenomena as it helped the researcher to identify the responses to the research objectives from various dimensions (Kuada, 2012). Also, the literature review method enhanced the credibility of the results. This is due to fact that the responses were from studies by other researchers who had undertaken similar research, which made the findings credible and reliable. The main weakness of the literature review method or the secondary research was that it was likely for the researcher to collect data that was irrelevant or outdated. The researcher could also collect data from unreliable and unverifiable sources that did not have credible information about the issue under investigation. In order to overcome these weaknesses, the researcher had to put in place measures that ensured that the research was relevant and up to date and as well as ensure that the sources used in the research were credible (Ritchie et al. 2013). This was done through development of criteria that would be used to eliminate unnecessary information. The next section demonstrates the inclusion-exclusion criteria that was used by researcher to select information that was objective, credible and relevant to the research.

3.2 Data collection methods and procedure

This study was carried out with the help of interview surveys which is described as a data-gathering method in which different validated questions of the study are designated by the researcher on the basis of pre-existing index and administered through a participants in the study using different methods such as self-interception of participants or emails (Mathers, Foix and Hunn 2006). Under this current study, a total of 5 interviewees who were exclusively managers of various Finnish companies were selected to take part in the study. The main advantage for the use of interviews as data gathering method in this study is due to its flexibility as it allows room for

participants to express their opinions, thus leading to emergence of more insightful information unlike in the case of questionnaire survey (Mathers, Foix and Hunn 2006).

Interviews were conducted in October and were mainly through face to face interaction with the 5 selected interviewees at various Finnish firms. The interviews commenced by the researcher explaining the intended purpose of the study to the interviewees as well as explaining some of their rights as study participants during the entire study process. Thereafter, the interviewees were asked a few questions as presented in the interview transcript in the appendix. When the respondents gave their responses to various interview questions, the researcher recorded all their responses in a laptop under different themes.

3.3 Participants' demographic analysis

Five participants took part in this study, and, for this study, they were identified as participants A, B, C, D, and E, based on their order of participation. Out of the five participants for the study, three were women, and two were men. All of them were staff of the organizations they represented and were in full-time employment. The participants were all in some position of leadership, with three being in middle-level management (like supervision) and two of them being in top management.

Additionally, two of them – the ones who were in top management – were also owners of the organization and were, therefore, making management decisions regarding how the company operates and where the company is headed long-term.

In terms of age, all the participants were adults older than 30 years and not older than 50 years, except for one participant who was in their mid-fifties. In terms of education, all the participants were well-educated with an undergraduate degree and above. Table 3.1 is a summary of the respondents' profile.

Table 3.1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Participant	Gender	Age-group in years	Education level	Occupation or position	Experience in the company (yrs.)
A	Female	30-40	Master	Supervisor	4
B	Male	30-40	Undergrad	Service director	2
C	Male	40-50	Undergrad	Manager & owner	0
D	Female	30-40	Undergrad	Marketing	12
E	Male	50-60	Master	Manager & owner	9

From this profile, it is notable that most of the participants are younger people, both male and female, with higher educational attainment and higher incomes than the average Finnish levels. Compared to the table, the lowest income bracket is €3,500-€4,000, whereas the average monthly income level for Finland is €3,317 (Statistics Finland, 2016). The findings suggest that most of the people employed in technology companies are likely to be younger and from across genders. It also suggests that Finnish companies are likely to pay significantly above-average wages to retain their talent, which is not surprising given that they are also well educated. These perspectives are important for this study because they inform how the feedback from the respondents is framed and understood.

3.4. Data analysis

After the selection of this data using the exclusion-inclusion criteria that has been described above, the data was then analyzed using the thematic analysis strategy. The thematic analysis strategy was a qualitative data analysis strategy that focused on

theme identification and analysis (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). This entailed identification of pattern and recurrence of certain words and phrases that supported a theme. According to Greg, Kathleen and Emily (2012) the thematic analysis had six phases that were reading the content to familiarize with the details. The second phase involved identification of codes by journaling the keywords and phrases and patterns in each article. The third phase involved combining the codes into major themes. The fourth phase involved identifying gaps and supportive information that supported the themes related to the objectives of the study (Corbin and Strauss, 2014). The other phase involved checking whether the data adequately supported the themes while the final phase involved compiling the information and demonstrating how the themes were connected to the data through codes and other supportive patterns identified by the researcher. According to Castleberry and Nolen (2018) the main merit of thematic analysis was its capacity to link the research themes with verifiable patterns and previous data which enhanced the reliability of the study. Thematic analysis was also appropriate for investigation with multiple datasets as was the case of this research as it involved multiple datasets from different companies (Alholjailan, 2012).

3.5 Research ethics

The main ethical stance adopted by this study related to the acknowledgment of the sources used in the data analysis and in the main research results. The researcher ensured that each source was properly cited and referenced in the references section (Punch, 2013). Besides, the researcher ensured that participants' identity was concealed even if it was exposed in the previous studies to enhance the privacy and confidentiality aspects of the research (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

4 Findings and analysis

4.1 Impacts of social technologies on mobile work from home communication

To find out how social technologies have influenced communication between the office and those who do mobile work from home among employees working at Finnish companies, three questions were asked, starting with what the participants thought constituted mobile work from home within the company. To this question,

the participants generally tended towards the idea that mobile work from home is work that could be completed without necessarily having to come to the office. This implies that, while the employee does not need to be in the office to complete the job, they do not necessarily have to be at home as they can work from a library, inside a plane, at a restaurant, in a park and any other place they can find a good working environment. However, respondent E gave an interesting perspective, which was not shared by other respondents. The respondent noted that mobile work from home in the organization is distinct from office work in that “employees may not carry their office work home, but they could carry the work they were allowed to do at home to the office.” This is simply because some assignments contain sensitive information that may not be accessed away from the work offices, while the kinds of tasks that can be done at home are not highly sensitive.

The second question was about how social technologies have changed the participant’s organization, and all participants pointed out that technology has had mostly a positive impact to their organizations. Giving examples, participant C said the main changes that social technology has brought to the company was in communication. While earlier options were restricted to emailing, face to face and letters, social technologies have brought with it social media such as WhatsApp, through which the staff can more easily communicate. Respondent D argued that while social media had huge advantages, one major negative change was that some employees want to use social media during company time, which leads to wastage of human resources.

The last question asked whether social media such as Facebook and Twitter had been effective in unifying communication among the employees. It emerged that social

media had unified communication in some organizations but not others. For instance, respondent A pointed out that the organization did not use social media to do internal communication. However, respondents D and E admitted that they had found some useful apps, which allow them to communicate much more efficiently. This has led to unification of communication because people can chat in groups, and all employees can further access a virtual forum where they can post messages and get feedback.

4.2. Influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in Finnish companies

For this part, there were two main questions. The first was concerned with social media technologies and networks, and how they have contributed to information sharing among employees in your organization. Respondent A mentioned that the organization uses social technologies mostly for external communication as opposed to internal communication. For this reason, it has not contributed much to collaboration of employees. This perspective was shared by respondent B. On the other hand, the rest of the respondents admitted that social technologies had led to increased communication collaboration. Specifically, respondents D and C mentioned that social media is a cheaper communication alternative and for this reason, the organizations rely on some apps which allow them not only to chat, but also to do more tasks such as routine scheduling, data sharing, and even sharing knowledge when working on group assignments.

The second question asked how social technologies impacted employee engagement in the organization. Respondent A said that there had been minimal impacts on employee collaboration, mainly because of the reasons given earlier, that social

technologies like Facebook and Twitter are used mainly to communicate with consumers, not among employees. This is the same view that was held by respondent B. Respondent C noted that these technologies, including Instagram and Twitter, help in collaboration since it is part of the job especially within the marketing department. Respondent D noted that communication has improved among employees and this has positively influenced engagement because employees communicate more and discuss issues about their roles more.

4.3. Role of social technologies on face to face communication with employees

The first key research question of the study was how social technologies influence face to face interactions between employees and the management as well as the employees themselves. Four interview items used to get reactions from the participants, and the first one asked, “How have social technologies impacted the quality and quantity of face to face communication among employees in your organization?” The respondents gave varied but closely related views to this question, pointing towards the improved communication and reduced communication frequency based on the use of social technologies. For instance, respondent A pointed out that the main impact of using technology to communicate within the workplace was reduced face-to-face communication. The respondent said, “for our organization, it has led to reduced face to face communication among employees who communicate much more through apps.” Respondents C and D also pointed this out, noting that this has resulted from the convenience of being able to talk to someone through texts, calls and even video calls, which eliminates the need to be present. According to respondent E, “quality of face to face communication

increased with technology usage mainly because, after people talk on phone or through text, they may decide to schedule a face to face whereby they focus on the main issues they could not settle on text or calls.” On the other hand, as people continue to use technologies like WhatsApp to communicate, added respondent E, they realize that they need much less face to face communication. Notably, while introduction of technology-based or technology-aided communication reduced face-to-face communication, there was a higher reduction of face-to-face communication among employees compared to the rate of reduction of face-to-face communication between employees and their bosses.

Another question asked if the participants would explain any of the positive attributes in which social technologies have impacted on face to face communication between senior employees and junior employees in your organization. To this question, two respondents did not give a clear answer, with one remarking that they were relatively new in the organization to give a good answer, and the other saying that they were not able to see specific positives or negatives between the two groups of employees. However, there was a general agreement among the remaining three respondents that technologies have positively impacted face-to-face communication, with each respondent giving a unique advantage they saw. Notably, respondent D said that technology had made it possible for people to communicate when they are tens or hundreds of kilometers away from each other, which was not initially possible. This reduces the cost of transport and the issue of time that would be required were the respondents want to meet face-to-face before communicating. Respondent C pointed out that technologies such as WhatsApp and Skype provide

free calls if someone has internet access, and this reduces the cost of calling compared to traditional phone calls.

Further, respondent E said that most modern communication technologies do not just support communication at a low or no cost, but they also have video-call options, which were expensive to set up in the past. "Today," said respondent E, "anyone with a smartphone and an app can make a conference call." For an organization, cost reduction and video calling capabilities are welcome because they reduce the final customer costs for services, and at the same time make it possible for the organization to customize its communications with staff based on the best channels, thereby increasing satisfaction levels of the employees.

The third question asked about the negative impacts of technology on communication between senior and junior employees in your organization. To this question, one respondent insisted that they were new to the organization and could, therefore, not point out exactly how negatively the organization had been impacted. The other four respondents admitted that the use of technology for communication to communicate between the management and the staff has its drawbacks.

According to respondent A, employees can lie when using WhatsApp or any other apps, especially about their availability and their progress with any given assignments. Further, respondent C noted that employees could take advantage of technology to deliver less than standard work, especially when they are working at home. Respondent E agreed with this sentiment, noting that this is likely to occur because "physical supervision is eliminated when employees are working from home, and some employees, especially those who are poor at working without supervision, may misuse this opportunity and deliver substandard services to our

customers.” According to respondent D, the main disadvantage that comes with having technology used for communication in organizations is the associated costs. “For instance,” the respondent noted, “it may be necessary for an organization to provide employees with smartphones, or subscriptions to enterprise services, or at least reimburse them for their internet and mobile expenses.” Such costs are avoided if technology is not used.

The last question in this section asked participants to say if they thought the effect of social technologies on communication between senior employees and junior employees in your organization has been positive or negative overall. All the respondents noted that the positive impacts of technologies on communication far outweighed the negative ones. For this reason, they concluded that the use of technology had an overall positive impact to their organizations. Further, respondents E and C noted that the negative impacts associated with using technology could be minimised when the organization takes several measures to improve performance. According to respondent E, this includes putting in place policies and regulations about working hours even while at home, putting in place quality guidelines that employees ought to meet depending on their roles.

Respondent C further added that organizations could go as far as putting in place trackers which monitor how many hours an employee has worked on an assignment, especially if it can be measured based on hours spent on the company’s portal, number of clicks made per hour, output size, number of customers serviced, and metrics like that. These opinions are similar to what Haddud, Dugger, and Gill (2016) posit in their study when they argue that tracking performance can help improve employee productivity if done in the right way. Further, Baym also argued that social

technologies enhance face to face communications as the more one communicates through social technologies, the more they would be inclined to communicate with them face to face (Forbes 2017).

4.4. How social technologies unified communication among employees in Finnish companies

The respondents were first asked what they understood by the unification of communication. They had an idea what this was and correctly implied that it referred to closer communication among people within the organization. The second question asked the respondents to describe the extent of unification of communication that social technologies have brought to their organizations. Respondent E noted that social media technology had provided opportunities for employees significantly since they can more easily communicate with one another both on issues related to work, as well as non-work issues. Respondent D made similar comments, noting that employees can easily share their “personal issues,” which refer to issues about their love life, home affairs, families, goals, and dreams. According to respondent E, these issues do not make part of daily jobs, but they are important for employees who want to build personal connections.

Lastly, respondents were further asked whether Facebook, Twitter, and other social media had played any role in bringing this unification of communication within the organization. On this, there were different opinions. Respondents A and B noted that there was no significant unification resulting from social networks. Respondent C could not answer this clearly, while on the other hand, respondents D and E said with confidence that there had been a huge impact of social technologies in unifying communication.

5 Discussion, conclusions, and recommendations

5.1 Discussion

The previous chapter has presented the findings from the interviews with the respondents. From these findings, several key issues stand out, which help to answer the study questions raised in chapter 1. On the question of how social technologies have impacted mobile work from home communication in Finnish companies, the findings show that there is a generally positive impact. From the respondents' attitudes, it is evident that organizations in Finland not only allow staff to work from home, but they also leverage social tools to make this option a seamless one for employees who have to work at home for one reason or the other. This shows that organizations have come to appreciate what researchers consider to be a necessary step in the shift towards technological adoption. The findings for this question are in line with existing literature. As Casio and Montealegre (2016) rightly noted, the modern organization has allowed employees to attend to work emails at the comfort of their homes while taking personal time without having to be physically present in the office. Additionally, Subramanian (2017) also noted that the development of social technologies had enabled employees to take part in a conference call in the odd hours of the night or day and conduct their activities afterward.

On the question of the influence of social technologies on communication collaboration among employees in the Finnish companies, the study found two differing views. Some Finnish organizations have their internal communication augmented by social technologies. While it requires further studies to establish what is the nature of companies that support social media communication and

collaboration, the findings seem to show that companies with significant marketing activities may be the most front-placed to have it. On the other hand, some organizations have social media purely for connecting with their customers, and even then, communication is minimal through social media. As Husain (2013) rightly noted, allowing collaboration through social media is advantageous for two main reasons. It makes it easier for those working at home to connect with those working at the office, thereby leading to even more people preferring to work from home. Agreeably, Tanford and Montgomery (2014) point out that this has resulted in a balanced work-life that is beneficial to both the organization and the individual employees, with the organization gaining in terms of increased productivity while individual employees gaining in terms of happy work experience.

The third study question was about the role of social technologies on interpersonal/face to face communication with employees in the Finnish companies. From the findings, it is seen that social technologies reduce the quantity of face to face communication. As more people use social media to collaborate during work hours and to chat during their free time, they increasingly find it unnecessary to meet for face to face communication. Further, the global nature of work today which makes it possible for people to work virtually from home makes it cost-prohibitive to meet, making people switch to social technologies. This finding is in line with those of Tanford and Montgomery (2014), who found that frequency of face to face communication goes down the more people use social media.

On the other hand, the quality of face to face communication was found to increase among respondents. The overriding reason was that because people do not meet as often, the few times that they do, they usually have a lot of depth to share. This

finding is in line with that of Drago (2015), who found that despite how preoccupied people are, when necessary they can find time to meet with the people who matter most to them in their work, including their team members, and in the case of their supervisors they usually have little choice. Such meetings are bound to be very important, which increases their quality.

The last research question was concerned with how social technologies have unified communication among employees in the Finnish companies. It was found that some organizations saw increase in the unification of communication, while others did not. Upon further inquiry, it emerged that organizations that saw an increase in unified communication were those that had significant use for social media in their internal operations. These organizations use social platforms for task scheduling, connecting with customers, co-operating in teams and sharing official communication, especially through social apps that support group communication. Tanford and Montgomery (2014) further support the idea of a unified work environment as a result of social media technologies. The reason is that it takes shorter time to communicate to employees by leveraging on social technologies such as videos in the context of a collaborative work environment as employees pay more attention than in situations where social technologies are lacking. Apart from video conferencing, social media platforms such as Facebook also play a very essential role in organizational communication by filling the humanity gap that cannot be effectively filled by conference calls and impersonal emails, As Drago (2015) rightly pointed out, social technologies increase emotional interrelationship as well as engagement among employees in an organization.

5.2. Limitations and future research avenues

This study had two main limitations. It was focused on only five participants to represent the Finnish market. This is considered a small sample, which may give a picture of the reality in a high niche area. However, the sample may not adequately represent the Finnish market. Thus, it is recommended that, should a follow-up study be made, the study should consider using a relatively larger sample.

Secondly, the study findings validity may be questioned in terms of the kind of companies sampled. Specifically, the study only focused on small companies. Thus, the structure and organization policies may be significantly different from those of large organizations, making these findings likely to be invalid when being applied to larger companies without further study justifications. Thus, it is suggested that future studies focus on considering larger sample size. Specifically, it is suggested that future researchers consider expanding the size of their representative sample to include listed Finnish companies while testing the same variable.

Lastly, the study focused on the impacts of social technologies on communication and relationships within the organization. However, these concerns are wide, and while they are interrelated, they should be studied separately. It would also be helpful to consider using a more quantitative approach to test the conclusions reached in this study. Thus, it is recommended that future studies not only study only the impacts of social technologies on communication or relationships but also that such a study takes a quantitative approach.

5.3 Conclusion

This thesis was concerned with the study of how social technologies influence organizational communications and relationships. The key areas for the study, as noted in chapters one and two, were to determine how social technologies influence mobile work from home communication, communication collaboration among employees, interpersonal face to face communication with employees, and unification of communication among employees. To this end, the study was guided by four main research questions.

Notably, as captured in the methodology, the primary data analyzed here was gathered from five participants from various organizations within Finland using interviews. The study finds that social technologies play an important role in organizations communication as well as relationships. However, it is important to note that the effect is not the same for all organizations, as some organizations have little use for social media in their daily routines. This is likely to be the case for Finnish companies that are not targeting large customer audience but instead provide specialized services such as consultancy or corporate services to dedicated clients. This reduces their need for social media communication, except for occasional promotional campaigns.

5.3 Recommendations

The first recommendation is to organizations that have an active marketing department. It is recommended that the management of such organizations not only allow the use of social media but promote it through provision of smartphones, software access, and Wi-Fi, among other technological requirements. This decision

will give the marketing team more tools to communicate with their potential as well as active customers, thereby increasing revenue for the organization.

It is also recommended that organizations that do not have an urgent need for using social media to reach their customers (because of the nature of the products and services they sell) should still consider using social technologies. This is because the study has shown that social technologies go beyond offering a platform for communication. Beyond that, social media technology can provide avenues for collaboration among staff, especially where the team can work from home. These include group chat for teams, shared schedules, which allow group editing, as well as video communication through skype, among others.

6 References

Alholjailan, M.I. 2012. Thematic Analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 39-47.

Alony, I., Hasan, H. and Paris, C. 2014. Applying the attribution theory to IS research as a practical method for assessing post-adoption behavior. Accessed on 25 August 2019. Retrieved from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.843.9684&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

Bisel, R., Ford, D. and Keyton, J. 2007. Unobtrusive Control in a Leadership Organization: Integrating Control and Resistance. *Western Journal of Communication*, 71(2), 136-158.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. 2011. *Business research methods*. Cambridge: Oxford University Press.

Casio, W. & Montealegre, R. 2016. How Technology is Changing Work and Organization. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 3, 349-375.

Castleberry, A. and Nolen, A. 2018. Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: Is it as easy as it sounds? *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 10(6), pp. 807-815.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. 2011. *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.

Corbin, J. and Strauss, A. 2014. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Darshana, S. and Hidayati, Z. 2017. *Adaptive Structuration Theory View of Post Implementation Knowledge Management for Enterprise Systems*. Accessed on 27 August 2019. Retrieved from: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2f2f/7bca42957ca4b31c46c308fba9599394c378.pdf>.

Deloitte. 2014. *Mobile Consumer 2014: The Finnish Perspective*. Accessed on 17 August, 2019. Retrieved from:

https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/fi/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/Global%20Mobile%20Consumer%20Survey%202014_medium.pdf.

Drago, E. 2015. The Effects of Technology on Face-To Face Communication. *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communication*, 6(1), 13-19.

Drago, E. 2015. The Effects of Technology on Face-to Face Communication. *Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 6(1), 1-2

Forbes. 2013. How Technology has Changed Workplace Communication. Accessed on 27 August 2019. Retrieved from:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/unify/2013/12/10/how-technology-has-changed-workplace-communication/#e50a03b670bd>, (Accessed on 25th August 2019).

Forbes. 2013. How Technology has changed workplace communication. Accessed on 17 August,2019. Retrieved from:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/unify/2013/12/10/how-technology-has-changed-workplace-communication/#9fb1dd670bd5>.

Forbes. 2017. How Technology Impacts Work Culture. Accessed on 23 August 2019. Retrieved from:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/10/05/how-technology-impacts-work-culture/>.

Greg, G., Kathleen, M. and Emily, N. (2012) *Applied thematic analysis*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Haddud, A. Dugger, J. and Gill, P. (2016). Exploring the Impact of Internal Social Media Usage on Employee Engagement, *Journal of Social Media for Organizations* 1(3), 1-22.

Haynes, J. & Jones, D. 2012. 'A tale of two analyses: The use of archived qualitative data', *Sociological Research Online*, 17(2), 23-27.

Hinojosa, A.S., Gardner, W.L., Jack, H. Coglisier, C. and Gullifor, D. 2016. A Review of Dissonance Theory in Management Research: Opportunities for further development. *Journal of Management*, 43(1), 170-199.

Husain, Z. 2013. Effective Communication brings successful organizational change. *The Business and Management Review*, 3(2), 44-49.

IG Global. 2019. *What is Social Technology*. Accessed on 23 August,2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/digital-inclusion-crowdfunding-and-crowdsourcing-in-brazil/37941>.

Kuada, J. E. (2012) *Research methodology a project guide for university students*. Frederiksberg: Samfunds Literature.

Lethbridge, N. (2003). *Adaptive Structuration Theory: Relevant Structures for Web Technologies*. Accessed on 24 August 2019. Retrieved from: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5f17/f4fbe896e3fdc2b2fef45f044ff9bb9551f0.pdf>,

Mark, S. (2012). Technology and Social Theory (Review). *Technology and Culture*, 53(4), 918-920.

Mathers, N., Foix, N. and Hunn, A. 2006. Surveys and Questionnaires. *National Institute of Health Research*, 3(1), 2-48.

Maymon, R., Hall, C. N., Goetz, T., Chiarella, A. and Rahimi, S. 2018. Technology, attributions, and emotions in post-secondary education: An application of Weiner's attribution theory to academic computing problems. *PLoS ONE* 13(3), 1-36.

Miles, B., Huberman, A. and Saldana, J. 2014. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. 3rd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Monroe, J. 2002. Tompkins and Cheney's Organizational Identification. Accessed on 19 August 2019. Retrieved from: <http://zimmer.csufresno.edu/~johnca/spch100/8-8-tompkins.htm>.

National Communication Association. 2015. Investing in Collaborative Technology to Improve Communication? Proceed with Caution. Accessed on 21 August 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.natcom.org/communication-currents/investing-collaborative-technology-improve-communication-proceed-caution>

Onday, O. 2016. Classical Organizational Theory: From Generic Management of Socrates to Bureaucracy of Weber. *International Journal of Business and Management Review*, 4(1), 87-105)

Parry, E. and Solidoro, A. 2013. *Social Media as a Mechanism for Engagement*. *Advanced Series in Management*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Punch, K. F. (2013) *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Rains, S and Bonito, J. 2017. *Adaptive Structuration Theory*. *The International Encyclopedia of Organizational Communication*. Accessed on 27 August 2019.

Retrieved from:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314732319> Adaptive Structuration Theory.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (Eds.). 2013. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Robbins, S.F. and Judge, T.A. 2007. *Organizational Behavior*. 12th Ed. New York: Pearson Education Inc.

Rose, J. 2016. Evaluating the contribution of structuration theory to the information system discipline. Accessed on 26 August 2019. Retrieved from:
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/873f/49cb03463331305e413ed9109cc5522f7b43.pdf>.

Sadia, A, Mohd, B, Karid, Z., & Sanif, S. 2016. The Relationship between Organizational Communication and Employees Productivity with new Dimensions of Effective Communication Flow. *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies*, 2(2), 34-39.

Schwartz-Shea, P., & Yanow, D. 2012. *interpretive research design: concepts and processes*. New York: Routledge.

Seitan, R. 2017. *Organizational Communication. Organizational Discourses-A Literature Review*. Accessed on 17 August,2019. Retrieved from:
<http://journals.univdanubius.ro/index.php/communicatio/article/viewFile/4557/4313>.

Skarzauskiene, A., Zaleniene, I. and Tamosiunaite, R. 2013. Defining Social Technologies. Accessed on 20 August,2019. Retrieved from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267394392_Defining_social_technologies

Subramanian, K.R. 2017. Influence of Social Media in Interpersonal Communication. *International Journal of Scientific Progress and Research*, 109(38), pp. 70-74.

Tanford, S. and Montgomery, R. (2014). 'Effects of Social Influence and Cognitive Dissonance on Travel Purchase Decisions'. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(5) pp. 1-15.

Welles, J. 2017. *Cognitive Dissonance: A Critique*. East Marion, New York, USA

Winarso, W. 2018. *Organizational Communication; A Conceptual Framework*.

Accessed on 21 August,2019. Retrieved from:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325215167_Organizational_communicati
on_a_conceptual_framework](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325215167_Organizational_communicati_on_a_conceptual_framework).

Wu, L. 2013. Social Network Effects on Productivity and Job Security: Evidence from Adoption of Social Networking Tools. Accessed on 21 August 2019. Retrieved from:

https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1086&context=oid_papers